JULY 20/21 1992

Publishers Weekly®

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Fall 1992 Children's Books

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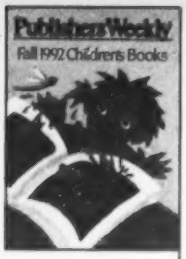
Denise Fleming's (In the Tall, Tall Grass; Count!) *vivid artwork encourages imaginations to take flight through a fall season bursting with new books.*



Publishers Weekly

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING

VOLUME 239 NUMBER 32/33 • ISSN 0000-0019 JULY 20/21, 1992

CONTENTS

35 FALL 1992 CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Edited by Diane Roback

36 ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR
by Mary-Alice Moore
Book fairs for kids are proving to be a good time for sponsors, too

39 A NEW LEASE ON LIFE FOR O.P. BOOKS
by Dan Stern
With the help of new technologies, abandoned classics find new life

44 FROM LITTLE ACORNS . . . .
A PW contest asks you to identify the children pictured here as the authors and artists they became

47 CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR FALL
Compiled by Sally Lodge / Edited by Shannon Maughan

192 SNEAK PREVIEWS
Compiled by Elizabeth Devereaux
An early peak at children's books slated for spring 1993

209 FALL CHILDREN'S AUDIO AND VIDEO
Compiled by John Zinsser

DEPARTMENTS

Highlights 5
Letters 6
News 8
Bookselling 18
Book News 26
PW Interview 217
Forecasts 220

COLUMNS

Rights 30
Talk of the Trade 31
Children's Bestsellers 43
Resource Directory 257
Booksellers Buyer's Guide 258
Weekly Exchange 259
People 264

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BISG Forecast: Faster Book Sales Growth in '92

Consumer books will lead as conspicuous consumption returns; slowdown seen after '93

Publishers' net dollar sales in all categories are growing faster this year than in the previous two years, and are expected to reach $16.8 million by the end of 1992, according to "Book Industry Trends 1992," the annual report by the Book Industry Study Group.

The predicted 1992 sales rise is 7.2%, compared to 4.5% in 1991 and 5.3% in 1990. Unit sales are projected to grow by 3.6% in 1992, to nearly 2.3 billion units—the fastest growth rate since 1989.

The projected figures are equally cheery for consumer spending on books: more than $21.6 billion in 1992, a 7.9% increase over last year, for an estimated total of $21.6 billion. It is projected to jump by comparable amounts annually in the years up through 1995.

In a series of overviews on segments of publishing by industry observers, Gordon Graham, editor of *Logos* and former chairman of Butterworths, notes that one of the essentials for publishers in growth periods is long-term planning. He also observes that U.S. book exports are depressingly low: "The world's largest publishing industry, publishing in the world's most widely spoken language, publishes mainly for its own consumption." He also notes that consumer publishing is growing faster than "needs" publishing—reference, textbooks, professional, etc.—and that this probably indicates that personal expenditures are more easily made than those depending on institutional funding.

James Haughey of Cahners Economics, in his economic overview, predicts a "steady but relatively slow period of recovery ahead, lasting into 1994." He expects late 1992 and early 1993 to be the period of most rapid growth.

The report indicated five areas of publishing in which sales can be expected to increase in the period ahead: travel, the home, computers and software, Mexico and "1980s-style yuppie books," as conspicuous consumption returns.

PUBLISHERS' PROJECTED SALES TO 1996
Net Dollar Sales (Millions)

	Estimates		Projections	
	1986	1991	1992	1996
Trade (Total)	2340.6	4248.5	4703.8	6918.5
Mass Market Paperback	809.3	1258.9	1387.3	1888.7
Book Clubs	608.2	753.4	797.3	982.5
Mail Order Publications	650.4	733.6	765.6	895.5
Religious	572.7	838.5	898.1	1132.3
Professional	2076.5	2826.7	3063.5	4146.5
University Press	159.5	265.5	279.9	351.0
Elhi Textbooks	1595.1	2054.2	2061.3	2544.8
College Textbooks	1436.1	1997.3	2089.7	2718.2
Standardized Tests	97.3	133.5	144.2	190.2
Subscription Reference	410.9	552.4	591.0	766.2
All Books	**10756.6**	**15662.5**	**16781.7**	**22534.4**

CBA Convention: Christian Publishing in a State of Flux

News of more personnel changes and mergers greeted Christian booksellers and publishers right at the start of their annual convention in Dallas, June 27 to July 2.

At the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association banquet Saturday evening—the unofficial opening of the Christian Booksellers Association meeting—Doug Ross, ECPA executive director, announced that the Multnomah School of the Bible, located in Portland, has agreed to sell its Multnomah Press to Questar Publishers in Sisters, Ore.

Following recent announcements of Nelson acquiring Here's Life and Baker buying Revell, Ross commented that in order to cover the loss of dues-paying members, perhaps membership fees for ECPA should be increased. Adding to the climate of uncertainty, Zondervan's planned management buyout was placed on hold and HarperCollins, its parent company, is said to be looking over Word for possible acquisition. They are reportedly among a dozen different entities currently exploring possibilities at Word.

The talk at CBA, therefore, was certainly not focused on big books but on all the recent shifts. Glenn Bailey, Spring Arbor's CEO, had been relieved of his duties only the week before CBA began and there was much discussion of who would be his replacement. CBA attendees learned of Broadman Press director Johnnie Godwin's departure from his post at the show.

Nevertheless, all these changes were not being linked to business downturns. According to Bill Anderson, president of CBA, the fall looked good for his constituents. And even though some publishers found traffic a bit lighter than usual and orders somewhat down from previous meetings, most were pleased with the level of activity. Jan Dennis, editorial v-p of Crossway, and Sara Fortenberry, Nelson's marketing director, were looking forward to a "rosy" fall. Dennis was pleased with the orders for what may be the longest Christian novel to date, *Glastonbury* by Donna Fletcher Crow, at 864 pages. Fortenberry was buoyed by bookseller reception for The Days of Laura Ingalls Wilder series by T. L. Tedrow.

Newly emerging themes include fathering and the environment; hardly a Christian publisher does not have at least one book in one of these categories.

A more detailed convention report will appear in *PW*'s August 10 issue.

—WILLIAM GRIFFIN

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

Abrams, Harry 17
Africa World Press 19
Alladin Juvenile 20-21
Andrews & McMeel 24-25
Arcade Publishing 23
Archway Paperbacks 28-29
Atheneum Juvenile 32-33
Avon Books 27
Baker & Taylor Books 53
Ballantine Books 46
Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group 49-51
Barron's Educational Series 55
Beech Tree Books 59
Boyd's Mills Press 60-61
R.R. Bowker 56-57
Bradbury Press 63
Candlewick Press 64-65
Chronicle Books 67,243
Clarion Books 69
Cobblehill Books 70
Cosmep, Inc. 75
Crown Publishers 72-73
Dial Books 76-77
Disney Press 78-79
*R.R. Donnelley & Sons 176A-D
Dover Publications 83
Dutton 84-85
Eva-Tone, Inc. 215
Farrar Straus Giroux 88-90
Firefly Books 94-95
Four Winds Press 93
Golden Press ....Cvr 2, Flap A,B, p.1
Graphique de France 6
Greenwillow Books 97
Gulf Publishing 250
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 232-236
HarperCollins Publishers 98-103
Henry Holt 109
Holiday House 107
Houghton Mifflin 110-111
Hyperion Books 113-115
Ideals Publishing 117
Ingram Books 7
Ingram/Commtron 212
Just Us Books 119
Knopf, Alfred A 121-125
Little Brown & Co. 128-130
Lodestar Books 127
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard 133
MCA/Universal Home Video 208
McElderry, Margaret 137
Macmillan Children's Books 134-135
Marsh Media 34
Morrow, William 139
Mulberry Books 141
Thomas Nelson 142-148
North South Books 151
Orchard Books 153
Ortho Books 15
Penton Overseas 213
Phanes Press 238
Pleasant Co. ....Cvr 4, 239
Price Stern Sloan 154-155
Prometheus Books 157
Publishers Group West 172-173
Puffin Books 166-170
Putnam Juvenile 158-163
R&S Books 175
Random House 181-185
Ringier America 12
Rizzoli Graphics 179
Running Press 2
Scholastic Press ....Cvr 3, 194-199
Charles Scribner's Sons 201
Send-A-Book 231
Sierra Club 207
Simon & Schuster 204-205
Sony Kids' Music & Video 211
Stewart, Tabori & Chang 203
Sunset Publishing 216
Tambourine Books 219
Troll Associates 221
Tundra Books 251
Turner Publishing 4
Viking Children's Books 222-223
Walker & Co. 225
Warne, Frederick 227
Whispering Coyote Press 229
The Writer 214

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Publishers Weekly (ISSN 0000-0019) RPUSA 123397457 is published weekly, with the exception of the last week in December and with additional issues in January and February and with a combined July 20 and July 21 issue and a combined August 17 and August 18 issue. Published by the Cahners Publishing Company, a Division of Reed Publishing USA, 275 Washington St., Newton MA 02158-1630. Terrence M. McDermott, President/Chief Operating Officer; Frank J. Sibley, Executive Vice President; Robert T. Brawn, Sr. Vice President/General Manager; Jerry D. Neth, Senior Vice President/Publishing Operations; J.J. Walsh, Senior Vice President/ Finance; Thomas J. Dellamaria, Senior Vice President/Production and Manufacturing; Ralph Knupp, Vice President/Human Resources. Circulation records are maintained at Fulfillment Corp. of America, 205 West Center St., Marion, OH 43302. Second Class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43305.** All editorial and advertising correspondence should be addressed to the office of publication: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, 249 West 17th St., New York, NY 10011; telephone: 212/645-0067; telex:12-7703; fax: 212/242-7216. Address circulation correspondence and changes of address to PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43305 telephone 1-800-842-1669; in Canada and all other countries, telephone: 1-614-382-3322. Printed in USA.

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICES: U.S.A.: 1 year $119, 2 years $199, 3 years $279. Canada: 1 year $177, 2 years $301, 3 years $425. Air Delivery to all other countries: 1 year $260, 2 years $442, 3 years $624. (Remit in U.S. funds only). Single copies are available at $5.00 for regular issues and $10.00 for Announcement issues. PUBLISHERS WEEKLY is a registered trademark of Reed Properties, Inc., used under license. ☐ Specialized Business Magazines For Building and Construction, Research, Technology, Electronics, Computing, Printing, Publishing, Health Care, Food Service, Packaging, Environmental Engineering, Manufacturing, Entertainment, Media, Home Furnishings, Interior Design and Lodging. ☐ Specialized Consumer Magazines For Childcare, Boating and Wedding Planning.